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[REDACTED]  
THE DIRECTOR OF  
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

National Intelligence Council

18 March 1982

NOTE FOR: C/NIC  
Acting NIO/USSR-EE

FROM : MG Edward B. Atkeson, USA  
NIO/GPF

SUBJECT : JCS Reorganization

Recalling our conversation [REDACTED] on  
17 March regarding the thrust of the proposal of  
the Chairman, JCS for reorganization within DoD,  
I offer the attached paper for your information.  
The heart of the argument begins on page 5.  
I think you will see how ambitious it is.  
Particularly apropos of our discussion is the  
paragraph on page 8:

"The Office of the Secretary of Defense  
should be greatly reduced. It should  
not duplicate functions of the Joint  
Staff. Rather it should deal with  
routine, non-military matters such as  
public affairs, Congressional liaison,  
and administration of civilian personnel."

I am sure you can understand that this infor-  
mation is politically sensitive and should be  
treated as privileged for the time being.

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SUBJECT: JCS Reorganization

I don't know about the other services, but the Army is preparing a parallel proposal that the service chiefs mind their services while senior 4-star officers on their final tours of duty serve as members of the JCS.

*Teel.*

Edward B. Atkeson

Attachment:  
JCS Proposal

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PROPOSAL FOR A FUNDAMENTAL REFORM  
OF THE  
JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF SYSTEM

Why the System is no longer adequate

As the means of warfare have changed over the past two hundred years, the requirements for command and control structures have changed no less dramatically. The American response to this demand has followed a 20-30 year cycle, dating back at least to the Civil War and Lincoln's problems with his command and staff structure. Although some improvements were made during the Civil War, bureaucratic resistance within the War Department paralyzed progress for about three decades until Elihu Root's reforms, creating an Army General Staff. Again in 1917-1918 the need for change was felt keenly in light of our inadequacies in tactical intelligence and doctrine and command for air power. Perhaps equally important was the new requirement for control of industrial and manpower mobilization that arose in WW I. These problems were not solved by the eve of WW II; thus they had to be dealt with in course of the conflict. The National Security Act of 1947 was, in effect, an attempt to codify in law the changes that had occurred during war. We are now into the fourth decade since that law established the Joint Chiefs of Staff system. In the meanwhile, the changes in communications, intelligence, and combat technology have been more dramatic than in any previous four decades. Accordingly, the requisites for command, control, communications, intelligence, and

mobilization/modernization are significantly different than the requisites for which the Act of 1947 was designed to meet.

A sense of the magnitude of the change is readily apparent if one merely considers what is required of command and operational coordination at the national level today as compared to 1941-45. In WW II, the Joint Chiefs could leave the daily and hourly coordination of theater operations in the hands of theater and lower command levels. Eisenhower was given very general instructions about his mission in Europe; the same was true for MacArthur in the Pacific Theater. The Chiefs dealt with the major resource allocation issues in a secure environment, free from enemy attack, and hashed out differences at a relatively leisurely pace. Today, if a general war started, the national command authorities would be required to coordinate some aspects of military operations on an hourly basis. They would receive tactical intelligence on a "real time" basis, intelligence not always available to theater and lower echelons, and they would have to make decisions about launches of strategic weapons to other continents that require minute coordination with tactical forces within theaters of operation -- e.g., Europe, East Asia, and the Middle East. At the same time, they would be subjected to nuclear strikes of great accuracy by our adversaries. The JCS today has neither the authority over the services nor the C<sup>3</sup>I structure to provide the President with the operational military staff support he would need for such a conflict.

This predicament is not limited to the upper end of the spectrum of conflict but persists just as fully at the lowest end

of the spectrum. The Iran rescue mission is a case in point. Modern communications make it possible for the President to direct in great detail such operations. The same communications technology, used by the media, creates public pressures that force him to exercise that control. He could not bear the image of non-involvement if he did not take all the opportunities to influence the action that modern technology allows him. The recent press fury over the failure of President's aides to wake him to inform him of the downing of two Libyan fighters by the US Navy is a case in point.

The centralizing pressures, therefore, come from many quarters -- the press, adversaries' growing military capabilities, the nature of the technology, and the gains in military operational effectiveness that potentially derive from satellites, intercontinental rocketry, airlift, and computers.

The requisites for effective command and control today are not limited to wartime. They are equally great for peace. In strategic planning, in developing new weapons and intelligence systems, in developing and validating new doctrine for the employment of modernized forces, the imperatives for changes in JCS authority are enormous. New weapons and technology inevitably raise fundamental questions about traditional "roles and missions" of the military services. As new systems come into the military inventory and the old "roles and missions" remain unchanged, the tensions, inefficiencies, and control inadequacies multiply. As a result, the logjam of unresolved problems grows, and our military power does not expand in proportion to additional resources allocated to defense. The

present fragmentation in responsibility and authority for building new force structure and tying it to security missions through strategic planning is perhaps an even larger impediment to meeting the military requisites for the U.S. in the 1980s than is the inadequacy of the command structure for conducting wartime operations.

Efforts to repair the JCS system

President Eisenhower seems to have understood in the 1950s the problems of command and control we would face today. His effort to amend the National Security Act in 1958 was aimed at curbing the power of the military services and enhancing the power of unified commanders. He appears to have been more concerned with wartime command and control issues than with planning and force development problems in this regard, but in any event, the Congress did not allow him to make the full extent of change he sought. In particular, the military services were not substantially curbed because their congressional constituencies would not allow it.

Secretary of Defense McNamara understood the problems of force development and weapons procurement. His attention, therefore, was largely devoted to centralizing control over those kinds of issues. The JCS, unfortunately, was not the staff he chose to implement his policies. It simply could not devote its loyalty wholly to the Secretary. The chiefs themselves, double hatted as heads of their services, had other loyalties as well. Thus McNamara created within OSD a surrogate staff. "Systems analysis" was applied by the Secretary's staff to identify trade-offs and potential efficiencies. The failure of this approach was twofold. First, McNamara's

analysts could devise many promising options for mixing "inputs" to build force structure and weapons systems, but they could not determine effectively the resulting "outputs." Second, he neglected most of the wartime operational control issues except for those concerning strategic forces. The outcome was an effective plan for going to war with a single massive nuclear strike but little or no coordination of that plan with the operations of all the other forces. That serious fragmentation between strategic and general purpose forces remains deeply seated in our operational system today. Furthermore, in the war McNamara managed, in Vietnam, all the old WW II inter-service command and control problems persisted without any significant improvements.

In sum, not only has the 20-30 year cycle come round for change again, but the realities demanding change are greater than ever before.

The requisites for an adequate system for the 1980s and 1990s

Four major changes are necessary to give the JCS and Secretary the power to create an adequate system. The Congress must:

- a. Strengthen greatly the legal authority of the JCS at the expense of the military services.
- b. Create a separate budget for (all) aspects of national <sup>STAT</sup> C<sup>3</sup>I, relieving the JCS of dependency on the services for resources for C<sup>3</sup>I.
- c. Give the JCS full control of all funds for training and exercises above the division, air wing, and carrier battle group level.

d. Provide an independent inspectorate general responsible to the Secretary of Defense and the President to assess the ability of the JCS and the military services to execute their prescribed roles and missions.

A new authority for the JCS

The committee of the Joint Chiefs should be abolished.

5 \* In its place, a single chief of the JCS should be authorized and made responsible only to the Secretary of Defense and the President. ? He should have three to five deputies at the four star rank. Their specific responsibilities might be specified by law, but flexibility in defining them should be left to the chief and the Secretary because the chief of a new Joint Staff will require a great deal of backup in areas that only experience with a new system will reveal clearly. Neither the chief of the Joint Staff nor his deputies should have any responsibility split between the JCS and a military service. They must all be fully and only responsible to the leadership of the Joint Staff.

The Chief of the JCS must be given "personnel" authority over all officers detailed from the military services to JCS service. He should be able to dictate "by name" selections for promotion to general officer and colonel a small percentage of each service's annual promotion lists for grades O-6 through O-8. Precise numbers can be worked out based on the number of officers in each grade serving with the JCS. The purpose of this authority is to provide the Joint Staff system with enough power to attract and reward the highest quality officers for Joint Staff duty. With promotion



authority, the Joint Staff can ensure that the military services cannot intimidate or punish one of their officers who, while serving on the Joint Staff, argues issues against his service's parochial interests.

Joint Staff personnel authority must include the principal staff officers of all unified and specified commands as well as all officers assigned to the Joint Staff in Washington.

The command authority lines -- from the President, to the Secretary of Defense, and to the unified and specified commander <sup>STAT</sup> can remain essentially unchanged, as it is today. The only change would be dropping "through the Joint Chiefs of Staff" because the Joint Chiefs would not longer exist.

The Joint Staff should be given the responsibility for defining and modifying the roles and missions of the military services as experience and analysis dictates. Major changes might be required to be submitted to Congress for review, but the Joint Staff must have enough authority to prevent a service from blocking the evolution of more effective allocation of roles and missions as determined by the Secretary.

The military services can be left as they are today with responsibility for manning, training, and equipping the forces. In time, however, it will probably become necessary to create one or two new services. For example, an air defense service and a strategic forces service may prove appropriate, but that step should not be taken until the new system has had time to test and evaluate its appropriateness. <sup>STAT</sup>

Finally, the Joint Staff should be given full responsibility for tying planning to manpower, weapons development, and research and development. In practice, the services should retain their <sup>STAT</sup> present manpower and weapons acquisition systems, but the JCS must hold coordinating and veto responsibility over each service's programs.

The Office of the Secretary of Defense should be greatly reduced. It should not duplicate functions of the Joint Staff. Rather it should deal with routine, non-military matters such as public affairs, Congressional liaison, and administration of civilian personnel.

The service secretaries might be abolished, but they could be retained with small staffs to help the service chiefs with political and public affairs which would otherwise burden the Secretary of Defense. Enormous staff layering and duplication has grown up in OSD and the service secretariats. Literally hundreds of high-level posts can be eliminated in the secretariats. They grew up under the guise of "civilian control," but civilian control originally meant control by elected public officials. None of the personnel in these staffs are elected. Many are politically appointed and most are civil servants. Thus the role they are presumed to play is not the present reality. An argument for retaining the service secretaries with limited personal staffs is defensible, however, because they can serve as the eyes and ears of the Secretary of Defense for exerting the

policy line of the President when it might be resisted by the uniformed military. The close scrutiny of the military by the Congress, of course, already ensures an enormous restraint over the military by elected officials.

A separate Joint Staff budget for C<sup>3</sup>I

Our present inadequate C<sup>3</sup>I is caused by the inherent competition within the military services for funds. Given a choice between buying more tanks or providing money for unified command centers and communications, the Army would choose tanks. The same is true for the Air Force and aircraft, the Navy and ships. Given the additional tasks of linking plans to programs and budgets, the Joint Staff must have its own C<sup>3</sup>I systems independent of the services. This includes intelligence, of course. Already "fenced" in the General Defense Intelligence Program, funds for intelligence naturally should be separately budgeted for the Joint Staff. The Joint Staff C<sup>3</sup>I budget line would make statutory what is already practiced.

A separate military exercise budget for the JCS

The new Joint Staff should be required to develop an annual and five year exercise program (as it does now), but it should not be beholden to the services for funds for these exercises. The services' hold on these funds at present means that the services have an effective veto on the nature, extent, and purpose of joint exercises. The new statute should specify for the Joint Staff the purpose of exercises as follows:

- a. To test contingency plans for war. The annual and five year plan must include exercises that yield a sound basis

for determining the adequacy of war plans. To some extent, they do so under the present system, but they are not formally required to do so, and if they show serious shortfalls, the results cannot be used for altering service programs and budget submissions in a rigorous fashion.

b. To test, confirm, and evolve joint doctrine. Joint exercises have the potential to test defense "outputs" in a way that systems analysis cannot. This is because they are a rough approximation of wartime performance. Systems analysis will retain a key role in deciding mixes of "inputs" to be tested in exercise "outputs," but it will not be the final word. Take, for example, the long-standing debate over land-based versus sea-based air power. An exercise in the North Atlantic region might reveal that land-based air is more effective. The results would be difficult to dispute, at least more difficult to dismiss than studies by systems analysts. Exercises could show vividly the shortfalls in air and sea lift. They could teach a great deal about the most effective means of close air support, of air defense, of attacking "deep targets" in the Air-Land Battle doctrine (aircraft versus surface-to-surface rockets), of intelligence (space platforms versus air-breathing platforms), of ballistic missiles versus cruise missiles, and large carriers versus medium and small carriers. At present, each service has the autonomy to block such testing. That is why the logjam of old issues about weapons systems remains unbroken and grows larger each year.

c. To determine the field worthiness of weapons systems and equipment for R&D and acquisition purposes. Only extensive exercises reveal whether new equipment will work effectively. STAT  
Debates about the M-1 tank, the F-15 fighter, the Patriot air defense system, and new submarines could be based on more reliable information if they were put through exercises. Field experience can more effectively direct R&D efforts, weeding out crackpot applications of technology that an industrialist is pushing, and prompting effective modifications of present equipment.

The Joint Staff could be required to present the results of exercises under the above three categories of testing to the Congress as the primary basis for budget justifications. Such an approach would create a revolution in military programing and anlaysis far greater than the "McNamara revolution." It would put the "user" in the driver's seat where industry and parochial Congressional interests now sit. It would also force the uniformed military out of the "managerial" posture into central concern with developing combat power for specific missions. It would force them to think about resources versus missions rather than how much the Soviets are spending or some other unreliable yardstick.

An independent inspectorate general

An autonomous inspectorate general should be created by statute under the supervision of the Secretary of Defense and the President. STAT  
It could be composed of 20 or 30 retired three and four star generals and perhaps include senior civilians who have been

Secretaries of Defense or Secretaries of the Services and have a reputation for expertise in military policy. A three-year term of service should be the limit for a member of the inspectorate general.

The duties of the inspectorate general should be to pass judgment on military exercise performance using criteria established by the Joint Staff and approved by the Secretary of Defense and the President. It should not be allowed to introduce its own criteria. Rather it should maintain an independent referee role, applying the rules for the test, not making the rules.

It should provide reports on all three purposes of exercises: (a) the effectiveness of the forces for meeting war plans, (b) confirmation of doctrine, and (c) field worthiness of equipment and weapons.

The inspectorate general would require a small staff of full time assistants, the number to be specified by law.

What the new Joint Staff system will yield

✓✓ The rationale of the above proposed Joint Staff system is to force major concern with military "output" performance and to move away from the present system of attention to "inputs" and "activities" while assuming that "outputs" follow implicitly. A by-product would be a major reduction in the number of staffs and personnel. It would put planning, programing, and budgeting in one set of hands, the Joint Staff. It would achieve what President Eisenhower intended for command and control, and would

carry his scheme into the force development, R&D, acquisition, and mobilization functions as well. Finally, it would give the Congress a much easier way to determine how the resources it provides to the Defense Department are being used in support of military missions prescribed by the President. The Congress would also lose some of its present power to champion individual service interests for parochial and regional purposes when they are demonstrated by military exercise performance not to be in the national security interests.